

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR MISSION IN THE CHURCH

Some one has said, "The Church of Jesus Christ offers us the truest message concerning God, which leads to the secret of all worth while living." In the Church we get a fellowship with other Christians. That is one of the greatest helps in building a Christian character. The Church also offers comradeship with Jesus Christ, the most precious comradeship in the world. Then, too, the Church offers the most inspiring task in the world—the task in which we must use our best talents, our keenest wisdom, and highest genius in making this world a better place in which to live. In what other institution or organization is so much offered in return for our services? I believe we can safely say, "There is no other."

Before we can truly enjoy these privileges or enter into real service, there is something we must do. We must consecrate our lives to Christ, and obey Him so completely that He may work through us. He has told us to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto Him, which is our reasonable service." We cannot estimate the value of truly consecrated Christian young lives. God knows best how and where to use lives to bring honor and glory to Him, and satisfaction to the servant. We have many examples of men and women who consecrated their lives to Christ when young, and were much used of Him. The lives of Martin Luther, John Wesley, and many others, send out a challenge to us young people to give our lives into the service of the King of kings.

Let us consider for a while the mission or opportunities for service of young people in the Church. First, there is attendance. This may seem but a small thing, not even service, perhaps. But regular, prompt attendance at the house of God may be just what is needed to get some one else, who never attends, interested. May we not call that an opportunity for service?

The second is closely allied to the first. It is faithfulness. This applies to small duties, such as passing of papers in Sunday school, taking the offering, or giving a testimony in prayer meeting, or it may be applied to larger duties. If these are faithfully done, and if done with love, they will be rewarded, and a chance for greater service given. An example of faithfulness in one person will lead others to be faithful. The Church needs faithful workers.

The third opportunity for service of the young people is found in being loyal to our Christ. We hear so much these days about school loyalty, and loyalty to certain teams, or clubs, or societies. Compare the amount of loyalty shown there with the amount shown for Church and Christ. We ought to be ashamed of our lack of loyalty. We belong to the best institution in the world. Let us not be afraid to show our loyalty.

Fourth, we have the privilege of giving of our means to help build up our different church interests. Some may not be called into gospel work, but they can help with their means.

The fifth is the most inclusive—using our talents in the Church. Every one has some talent, I believe, and if these are used for God, will bring the best and most lasting results. Some person may think that he or she has no talent because that person can do nothing great. But even the gift of making friends is

a talent which may be well used in the Church. Then, a friendly smile, or a cheery word to discouraged ones may be just the help that one needs. Using these smaller talents aright may help to bring out some others that you never knew you had. Many people have the talent of singing, which, when used in the service of God, may prove instrumental in bringing souls into a saving knowledge of Jesus. We have all read of instances where this has been done. Some others may have the ability to teach. Our Sunday schools need the best teachers since they are bringing to the boys and girls those things which will help them to grow up into worthwhile living. As young people, let us regard highly the teaching of a Sunday school class, and put our very best efforts into the work. Others are leaders. We need leaders among our young people so that they might be led aright and such high ideals kept before them that will make a solid foundation for the Church of tomorrow. There are many other talents which we might mention, but each person knows the talent that he has. Let us not think any talent too small to use for our Master, for He has said, even a cup of water when given in His name, shall receive a reward.

In conclusion, living a Christ-like life will sum up all our other points. A life in which Christ is ruling will manifest these which we have been discussing. In His Word, Jesus tells us "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me." You have all seen it proved that if Christ is magnified in one life others will be drawn to Him.—A paper read at the General Conference W. Y. P. S. Convention at Houghton, N. Y., in June, 1931.—Editor.

—The Wesleyan Methodist

WHAT SHALL WE STRESS?

Youth has so much to learn. The years of childhood and adolescence pass so swiftly into the time of manhood and womanhood, when each one must go out to test the efficiency of the lessons learned in youth to meet their needs in the daily round of duty, service, and pleasure, making up the sum of life.

And how few hours out of those early impressionable years, are given to us who labor in the Sunday Schools, in which to teach the most necessary of all the lessons of life—the lesson of godliness which is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Does it not reasonably follow then, that, since we have so little time to work and so great a task to perform, we should diligently seek to know just where to put the emphasis, that the most possible good may be done in the time at our disposal?

If you have been faced, as some of us have, with the almost unbelievable ignorance of many young people and even adults concerning the most familiar stories of the Bible, you will perhaps feel that the greatest need of your class is that they be taught these stories and historical facts recorded in the sacred writings. And we are convinced that this very matter should have a large place in the teaching of primary and junior classes; but after all the story itself is but the husk, and as the pupil advances the thing he needs to learn is how to open the husk and find the meat treasured therein to nourish the life of his soul.

How disheartening it is for the teacher of an advanced class to find it impossible to use the stories and historical facts of Scripture as illus-

trative material without so much explaining and rehearsing as to dull the point, and cloud the thought meant to be made sharp and clear by the illustration. What an amount of faithful preaching of the Word too, goes to waste today because congregations are not familiar with the stories and historical facts recorded in the Bible. Whereas years ago a preacher could safely use the oxgoad of Shamgar as an illustration, assured that his hearers would know just what he was referring to; now it is necessary that he explain at very great length if he would have the most of the listeners to understand should he refer to even such a familiar subject as the raising of Lazarus from the dead. This may seem far-fetched, but you are at liberty to investigate for yourself and see how many high school students can give you a connected and intelligent account of this event. Much of the most beautiful of the world's poetry and literature is as Greek to the average person because they do not understand the frequent references to Scripture events and quotations.

Nor does the reproach for all this lack of knowledge lie on the Sunday School teacher altogether. Once Bible stories formed a large part of the daily program of entertainment and instruction provided by parents in the home for their children. Is it so now? Are parents professing holiness above reproach in this matter?

Let the primary and junior teacher be sure then, to stress this point in their teaching. Make your children as familiar with the names of Bible characters, and the events related in Scripture concerning them, as they are with the names and doings of their playmates. Preaching "grown-up" sermons at little children in Sunday School is so much time wasted; but if you can get them so well acquainted with such characters as the boy Samuel, the girl Miriam, the great apostle Paul, and most important of all, the Saviour, Jesus, that they will know just about what any one of them would be likely to do under certain circumstances, you will, to your great joy, find them often imitating these, and the advanced teacher under whose care these children come in later years, will surely rise up and call you blessed, as she finds her work made more effective because of the foundation you have laid.

And what a task confronts the teacher of the more advanced classes in these days when God is being robbed of all reality, power, and authority by those who profess to be men of wisdom and understanding. We who do know our God must be strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man to be able to stem the tide of unbelief and skepticism, that is sweeping preacher and people, teacher and scholars, away from their moorings of faith in the Divine Word of truth, and bearing them out on the bosom of an uncharted sea with powerless engines, broken rudder, and no anchor for the time of storm. God help us to know how to make eternal things REAL to these precious young people. To make them know that *the Lord reigneth*; that this world is not run by chance or hazard, or its affairs controlled altogether by the ignorance or worldly wisdom of man: though God may work through these things, let us strive to get it settled in their minds that in the final analysis *God reigns*, and the most profound wisdom of man, if opposed to His truth, is but foolishness.

Another point in our teaching which must be marked with particular emphasis these days, is the *absolute truth of God's Word* from Genesis to Revelation, without any reservations or apologies. And we can promise the teacher who unflinchingly stands for this truth, that you will many times have the privilege of being counted